DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 090 557 95 CS 201 220

AUTHOR Bogorad, Hope C.
TITLE A Unit on Discussion Skills. Students and Teachers Develop English Curriculum.
INSTITUTION Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 74
NOTE 58p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.75 HC-$3.15 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Communication (Thought Transfer); Curriculum Guides; *Discussion Experience; Discussion Groups; *English Curriculum; Group Behavior; Group Dynamics; *Group Relations; Interpersonal Competence; Junior High School Students; *Speaking Activities; *Speech Skills
IDENTIFIERS *Elementary Secondary Education Act Title III; ESEA Title III

ABSTRACT

This unit on discussion skills was designed for junior high school students who have elementary discussion skills. The two primary student objectives are: (1) to be able to express themselves openly, but without hurting the feelings of other people; and (2) to improve their discussion skills. The 12 lessons in the unit focus on freedom of expression in the classroom, reaching a consensus, evaluating a discussion, the role of a discussion chairperson, group interactions, small group discussion, and writing of discussion questions. Complete lesson plans, copies of the materials used, descriptions of the procedures, and short comments on the difficulties and progress experienced during each lesson are provided in the guide. (TO)

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

ED 090557

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

TITLE III PROJECT

STUDENTS AND TEACHERS DEVELOP ENGLISH CURRICULUM

A UNIT ON DISCUSSION SKILLS

by

Hope C. Bogorad
Ballou High School

Project Directors

Verna J. Dozier

Elva C. Wells

Project Office
Francis Junior High School
Washington, D. C.

1974

CS 201 220

A UNIT ON DISCUSSION SKILLS

This unit was designed for students who already have elementary discussion skills. It is therefore suggested that it not be used for sophomores.

RATIONALE

My students at the beginning of the school year named the following objectives among their ten major objectives for the year:

> We want to be able to express ourselves openly, but without hurting the feelings of other people.
>
> We want to improve our discussion skills.

I therefore devised this unit to make possible the achievement of these two related objectives.

SOURCES

Herman, D. M., and Ratliffe, S. A., editors. Discussion in the Secondary School. The Michigan Speech Association Curriculum Guide Series, No. 5. National Textbook Company. Skokie, Illinois. 1972.

Litsey, David M. "Small-Group Training and the English Classroom." English Journal. September, 1969.

Stanford, Gene, and Stanford, B. D. Learning Discussion Skills through Games. Citation Press. New York, 1969.

A NOTE ON GRADING THIS UNIT

Student work in this type of unit is often difficult to grade. I resorted for the most part to an extra-credit system so that good performers would be compensated but others not penalized. Every student who participated in a fishbowl discussion received an extra-credit A for that day. For full-class activities, students who performed well were given extra-credit A's for the day. It was impossible to grade small-group discussions, but presumably the best discussants were picked to represent the group in the fishbowl and thus earned A's. All individuals in the small group that designed the most carefully thought-out teacher report card, however, received A's. Everyone was graded on the discussion questions submitted in Lesson Seven. All observers received grades for the accuracy of their evaluations of the final fishbowl.

A number of students who do poorly on written work were able to raise their advisory grades as a result of this unit.

LESSON ONE

Objectives

The students will complete a pretest questionnaire on freedom of expression in this class.

The students will practice reaching consensus.

Procedure

Distribute Pretest Questionnaire. Collect promptly after they are completed.

Announce new unit. Draw students' attention to their objectives to which this unit is directed.

Distribute ditto entitled "Practice Reaching Consensus." Urge students to work efficiently so as to complete the task by the end of the period.

Materials

Pretest Questionnaire (ditto)

Practice Reaching Consensus (ditto)

Evaluation

Students' responses on questionnaire.

Success of groups in reaching consensus.

PRE-TEST QUESTIONNAIRE

DO NOT PUT YOUR NAME OF THIS PAPER

Please answer the following questions thoughtfully.

In this class I feel free to express myself

_____all the time (check one)

_____most of the time

_____sometimes

_____never

When I don't feel free to express myself, the reason most often is

_____ other students wouldn't like it (check one)
_____ the teacher wouldn't like it
_____ other students are talking
_____ the teacher is talking
_____ I don't trust the other students
_____ I don't trust the teacher
_____ Other (please write the reason) _____

In this class, the students who feel free to express themselves make up

_____ 100% of the class (check one)
_____ 75& of the class
_____ 50% of the class
_____ 25% of the class
_____ nobody in the class

What can the teacher do to free students to express themselves?

What can you, as a member of the class, do to free other students to express themselves?

PRACTICE REACHING CONSENSUS

Divide into groups of six or seven. Feel free to move chairs so that each group can form a circle.

Working alone, each person should mark the following statements with a D (disagree) or an A (agree).

_____ 1. Each person in a group should try to contribute to the group task even though he feels his contributions are not important.

_____ 2. A group should make certain that all members understand the problem before they begin to develop solutions.

_____ 3. As long as the group task is accomplished, it matters little how the group members feel about how well they worked together.

_____ 4. In order for a group to have direction, a chairman must be chosen.

_____ 5. All members of a group share equally in credit for group accomplishments and blame for group failure.

_____ 6. When a group member knows how to solve the group's problem, he should "take over" the group.

_____ 7. Self-satisfaction of each member cannot be achieved if the group task is placed ahead of individual goals.

_____ 8. Encouraging other members of the group to participate in the group task is time-consuming and usually non-productive.

When everyone has marked his own paper, the group should come to a <u>consensus</u> on each statement. (Consensus means the decisions are made by agreement, <u>not by vote</u>.) Use the following procedure:

1. Choose a group secretary.
2. Each person reads his response to the first question. If anyone has written "disagree", the group should reword the statement so that everyone in the group can support it. The secretary should write down the new wording.
3. Do the above for each statement on the list.
4. When consensus on all the statements is reached, the group should select two members of its group, again by consensus, to meet with representatives of the other groups.
5. Send a representative to the teacher to give her the secretary's report and the names of the two representatives chosen by the group.

KEEP THIS DITTO IN YOUR NOTEBOOK.

LESSON TWO

Objectives

The students will reach a consensus in a fishbowl discussion.

The students will evaluate that discussion.

Procedure

Before the class enters, arrange a circle of chairs in the middle of the room. There should be one chair for each group representative plus one extra chair. Arrange other chairs around the inner circle.

Direct the representatives to take seats in the inner circle. Give them their group's report from yesterday and copies of ditto "Reaching a Consensus of the Whole Class." Give other students copies of ditto "Observers." Write on the board the names of the students in the fishbowl.

Allow discussion to proceed as per instructions on ditto.

When the group's report has been handed to the teacher, read it to the class. Then, using questions on the observers' ditto, ask for observers' comments. Ask the following additional questions:

Did the group have a leader? Who?

Did the leadership change or was one person the leader throughout the discussion?

Did the group operate in accordance with the statements they agreed upon?

Materials

Secretaries' reports from previous day.

Reaching a Consensus of the Whole Class (ditto)

Observers' Report (ditto)

Evaluation

The group process in the discussion.

The observers' comments.

Comment

The students, both participants and observers, were completely involved in the lesson. On a number of occasions the extra chair was occupied, once by the teacher when the group was stymied.

What a lot is exposed when a discussion is put "under the microscope"! One fault was that the students in the fishbowl forget that they were representing a group and seemed to be speaking only for themselves. Another was that the silent members were not encouraged to give input, not even to give their consent to consensus.

The major problem was that of leadership. (The statement on which the group had the greatest difficulty in reaching consensus was No. 4, relating to the necessity of a chairman. This difficulty was reflected in the discussion process as well as in the discussion itself!) In the first period class, one student dominated the group. Any progress the group made was her doing, but she did not listen to others

nor encourage their input. Obviously resentment was created. Finally an observer took the extra chair and attempted to "tell her off." He wanted to pursue his point long after he had made it, however, and I had to ask him to return to the outer circle so that the discussion could continue. He complained to me after class because I had stopped him. I tried to explain that such a vitriolic attack would not solve the problem but that in the future lessons we would focus on it.

Because statement No. 4 had caused so much difficulty in both classes, I decided to make the role of a good chairman the subject of the next lesson.

Reaching a Consensus of the Whole Class
(Group in the Fishbowl)

The task (job) of the group is to arrive at a "class consensus" on each of the statements that were discussed yesterday in the other groups.

You will need your ditto from yesterday and the report written by your group's secretary.

Choose a secretary of today's group.

Each statement that was changed by any group yesterday must be discussed. You must arrive at consensus on these statements. This will represent the consensus of the whole class.

Remember that you are representing your group of yesterday. You must present their reasons for changing the wording as they did. You must try to get a settlement that will meet their approval and yet will be agreed on by all the members of this group.

The final wordings should be recorded by the secretary and presented to the teacher when the group's task has been completed.

The skill with which you worked yesterday convinced this observer that you can succeed today!

Note: From time to time, someone in the outer circle may take the empty seat in your group. When the person accomplishes his (her) purpose, he (she) will return to the outer circle.

Name _____

OBSERVERS

The task (job) of the group in the fishbowl is to arrive at a "class consensus" on each of the statements that were discussed yesterday in the other groups.

Notice that there is one empty chair in the fishbowl. If you would like to help clarify your group's opinion, or in any way help out the progress of the discussion, you may take the empty seat. When you have accomplished your purpose, return to your original seat.

Watch carefully the process of the discussion. Answer the following questions:

Who got the discussion started? _____

Who asked for information? _____

Who gave information when it was needed? _____

If the group became confused, who clarified the situation? _____

Who evaluated (judged) the group's work and/or progress? _____

Who kept the group working toward the completion of the task? _____

Who checked with the group to see how much agreement had been reached? _____

Note: It is possible that more than one person did each of these jobs. It is also possible that some of these jobs were unnecessary or just didn't get done. In other words, you may have several names on some blanks and none on others.

Please remember to turn in this report.

LESSON THREE

Objectives

The students will discuss the need for a discussion chairman in the light of new information.

The students will reach consensus on the meaning of "freedom of expression."

Procedure

As you probably have not yet had the opportunity to do so, it would be well to start this lesson with an explanation of the advantages of reaching consensus over the system of taking a majority vote. Certainly the latter system is quicker, but it excludes completly the opinions of the minority. Reaching consensus forces more meticulous thinking on the question; furthermore, it results in a more democratic decision.

Remind the class that in yesterday's discussion the group had the greatest difficulty in reaching consensus on statement No. 4: "In order for a group to have direction, a chairman must be chosen." One of the factors causing disagreement was lack of knowledge of the role of a good chairman. Let me give you some information, and then perhaps we can view the statement in a new light.

Distribute ditto "Group Process."

Read orally the list of responsibilities of a group leader. Ask students how the role of a group leader here described differs from the role of a dictator. Lead the

discussion through each point on the list.

Not only does the leader have specific duties, but every member of the group has duties. Read orally the responsibilities of a group member.

Does this information change your feelings about statement No. 4? Conduct discussion until consensus on that statement has been reached.

Read and explain task roles. The students will understand that for a successful discussion these tasks must be performed, but they may be done by any member of the group.

Explain the term "Resource Person". Say that the teacher can always be called on as a resource person.

Tell class that on the questionnaire they completed two days ago, they were asked to evaluate freedom of expression in this class. How do they define "freedom of expression"? Conduct discussion until consensus has been reached. (If time is running short, this item may be postponed until the beginning of the next lesson.)

Materials

Group Process (ditto)

Evaluation

Improvement in ability to reach consensus.

Comment

The information on responsibilities of a group leader and of group members was a revelation to the students. They readily agreed that a small group could function without a leader but that a large group would probably need one.

The latter point was made after I abdicated the leadership role. The discussion floundered until a student emerged as leader -- incidentally, it was the student who had objected to the dictatorial leadership the day before.

The class reached the following consensus on the meaning of freedom of expression:

Period 1. Expressing ourselves openly and freely means expressing ourselves in a relaxed manner without feeling hostility or creating any.

Period 2. Expressing ourselves openly and freely means speaking up when we have something to say.

GROUP PROCESS

Responsibilities of a Group Leader

1. Is sincerely sensitive to the needs of the group.
2. Reveals sincere interest in the group process and in accomplishing the group task.
3. When the question for discussion is known in advance, he prepares himself by research and analysis of the question.
4. Leads the discussion by:
   a. Establishing a climate that promotes maximum participation.
   b. Encouraging thorough analysis.
   c. Clarifying.
   d. Summarizing and keeping group members informed of their progress toward the group goal.
   e. Encouraging members to assume positive roles.

Responsibilities of a Group Member

1. Promotes group solidarity.
2. Clearly sees his relationship to other group members.
3. Is sincerely interested in the group process and in accomplishing the group goal.
4. When the question for discussion is known in advance, he prepares himself by research and analysis of the question.
5. Actively participates:
   a. Initiates ideas.
   b. Evaluates what he hears.
   c. Responds to the contributions of others.
   d. Welcomes evaluation of his ideas.
   e. Assumes leadership as needed.

Task Roles

The following task roles must be performed in any group if the group is to succeed. These roles may be played by a leader and/or any member.

1. Initiating. Proposing tasks or goals; defining a group problem; suggesting a procedure.
2. Information or opinion seeking. Requesting facts; asking for suggestions and ideas.
3. Information or opinion giving. Offering facts; stating a belief; giving suggestions or ideas.
4. Clarifying or elaborating. Interpreting or reflecting ideas and suggestions; indicating alternatives before the group; giving examples.
5. Summarizing. Pulling together related ideas; restating suggestions after the group has discussed them; offering a decision for the group to accept or reject.
6. Consensus testing. Checking with the group to see how much agreement has been reached.

KEEP THIS DITTO IN YOUR NOTEBOOK.

LESSON FOUR

Objectives

The students will comment on the results of the pre-test questionnaire.

The students will make living sculptures to exemplify the way they see members of the class relating to the group.

Procedure

Distribute copies of the results of the pre-test questionnaire. Ask students to read silently. Invite comments.

Explain the concept of the living sculpture. You might need to create an example. If so, arrange students in positions and relationships that show the way you see them in the group. Then ask individual students to do the same thing to show their perceptions of the group.

Materials

Results of Questionnaire on Freedom of Expression in This Class.

Evaluation

Comments on results of pre-test questionnaire.

Perceptions of the way individuals relate to the group.

Comment

Students were amused at the results of the questionnaire. They had little serious comment except to note the snall percentage that felt free to express themselves.

The living sculpture worked well in the first period class. It seemed to clear the air of factional hostility

by allowing the students to laugh at themselves. The students took great pleasure in placing the teacher in their sculptures, thus fostering a feeling of comraderie by making her part of the group.

The second period class refused to participate in the scheduled activity. The day being Friday, some students requested a free period. Others objected. The teacher sat in a student chair and let the discussion follow its own course. The discussion proved to be valuable in clarifying goals and values. The teacher participated as a group member, not as a leader.

RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN THIS CLASS

October 16, 1973
(Period 1)

In this class I feel free to express myself

all the time	7
most of the time	5
sometimes	14
never	2

When I don't feel free to express myself, the reason most often is

other students wouldn't like it	4
the teacher wouldn't like it	1
other students are talking	9
the teacher is talking	3
I don't trust other students	0
I don't trust the teacher	1

Other:
- I don't trust my answer.
- The teacher isn't reasonable.
- I'm not in the mood.
- I don't feel like it.
- I would rather listen sometimes
- People may get me wrong.
- Hostile atmosphere.

The students who feel free to express themselves make up

100% of the class	2
75% of the class	9
50% of the class	3
25% of the class	10
nobody	2

What can the teacher do to free students to express themselves?

- More organization fo only one person speaks at a time 2
- Encourage 2
- Don't know
- Make them talk
- Nothing
- Have more talking activities
- Let them speak when they really want to
- Listen to students
- Nothing more than she's doing already
- Have a spelling test between boys and girls
- Let them express themselves
- Demand respect while someone is talking

What can <u>you</u> do to free other students to express themselves?

- Cooperate
- Stop talking and listen
- Listen to what others say 4
- I shouldn't talk too much so that other get a chance
- Start talking more often
- Pay more attention to what others are saying

Invite other students to join our group; help them when they need help.
Keep trying to talk to them
Not be afraid to express ourselves
Nothing 4

RESULTS OF QUESTIONNAIRE ON FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN THIS CLASS

October 16, 1973 (Period 2)

In this class I feel free to express myself

all the time	4
most of the time	4
sometimes	13
never	7

When I don't feel free to express myself, the reason most often is

other students wouldn't like it	2
the teacher wouldn't like it	6
other students are talking	5
the teacher is talking	4
I don't trust other students	0
I don't trust the teacher	3

Other:

- I don't talk very much.
- The teacher always tells me to shut up.
- Don't feel like saying anything. 3
- I'm quiet anyway.

The students who feel free to express themselves make up

100% of the class	4
75% of the class	7
50% of the class	5
25% of the class	12
nobody	1

What can the teacher do to free students to express themselves?

- Let them talk
- Keep others quiet sometimes
- Anything
- ?
- Shut up
- Have group discussions
- Nothing 5
- Retire
- Make other students stop talking.
- Be cool.
- Keep her mouth shut sometimes.
- Have a talk session so that students can express their feelings.
- She should try and take complete control of her comrades.
- By making the discussion more interesting.
- Teach the students to interact - to act as one.
- Get them in the habit of answering questions and expressing their opinions
- Be free to express <u>herself</u>.

What can <u>you</u> do to free other students to express themselves?

- Wait; in due time they will express themselves.
- Nothing 7
- Mind your business while they attend to theirs.
- Tell them to talk when they get ready.
- By making the discussion more interesting.
- Anything.
- Keep your mouth shut and let everybody express their own self when called on.

LESSON FIVE

Objective

The students will practice group process skills in small group discussions.

Procedure

Ask students to read silently the ditto in their notebooks called "Group Process" to refresh their memories.

Distribute stapled three-page ditto. Permit discussion to proceed as per instructions in the ditto.

As each group report is submitted, give each member of the group an evaluation form. Ask students to complete the evaluations individually, not by group discussion. You may need to explain the continuum scale.

Materials

Which Teachers Should Be Hired? (three-page ditto)

Evaluation of Group Process (ditto)

Evaluation

Teacher observation of group process.

Student evaluations

Comment

The subject matter precipitated lively discussion. The students' evaluations were mainly "fours" and "fives".

WHICH TEACHERS SHOULD BE HIRED?

Pretend that a new high school will open in Washington, D.C. next semester. Pretend also that the Board of Education has finally recognized the fact that students are the best judges of teachers.

The Board of Education has given your group the task of ranking the teachers who have applied to teach English in the order of your preference. A summary of the teachers' qualifications is attached.

Procedure:

1. Get into a group of six or seven students.
2. Decide whether or not your group wants a chairman. If so, choose the chairman.
3. Choose a secretary for the group.
4. Read the qualifications of each candidate aloud, and discuss the factors in favor of hiring that teacher, and the factors against.
5. Reach consensus on a rank order. Number 1 will be the teacher you recommend most highly; number 10 will be the teacher you think would be poorest of all. The others should be ranked accordingly in between. The secretary will record the rank order you agree upon.

Choose two members of your group to represent the group at another meeting which will make the final decisions. The names of your representatives should be on the group's report.

7. Every member of the group should sign the final report which should then be presented to the teacher.

RIGHT ON FOR STUDENTS' RIGHTS!

APPLICANTS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH, MARTIN LUTHER KING HIGH SCHOOL

The following information is given about each applicant:
1. age 2. sex 3. race 4. education 5. experience
6. the applicant's answer to this question: "Why do you want to teach at Martin Luther King High School?"

A. 22, female, black, BA in English from Cornell University. No teaching experience. "Because I am young, intelligent, and black, I feel I can relate to black students."

B. 26, male, black, BS in Black Studies from Bowie State college. Assistant director of education for Black Activists League. "I want to teach black kids where it's at in whitey's world."

C. 48, female, white, BA in English from Connecticut College, MA in English from American University. 12 years experience at Anacostia High School. "I enjoy working with young people."

D. 37, female, black, BS in education from D. C. Teachers College, MA in education from University of Maryland. 5 years experience at Brown Junior High School and 5 years at Spingarn High School. "I believe that I can teach the skills that your students will need in order to find employment."

E. 32, male, black, BS in psychology from Mississippi State and MS in education from East Texas State. 10 years experience in various schools in the state of Mississippi. At his last school he was assistant basketball coach -- the team won the state championship for the last three years. "The pay scale for teachers in Washington is higher than in my home state."

F. 30, male, white, BA in English from Ohio State, MA in sociology from the University of Chicago. For the past 5 years he has been doing research for the Chicago Board of Education. "I am planning to write a book about teaching in the ghetto."

G. 28, male, white, BA in English from Dartmouth College, MA in drama from Catholic University. 3 years experience at McKinley High School. "I think I can turn kids on to learning about themselves and their world."

H. 45, female, black, BA in English from Oberlin College, MA in English from Howard University. 25 years experience teaching at all levels including junior college. "I would like to light the lamp of learning and inspire your students to be seekers after knowledge."

I. 39, male, white, BA in English from Harvard College, MA in English from Johns Hopkins University, PhD in English from Cambridge University. Taught at a private school for boys for 8 years. For the past five years has been teaching at the U. S. Army School for servicemen's children in Munich, Germany. "I believe that all high school students should have the opportunity to study the great literature of our culture."

J. 52, female, black, BA in English from Hampton Institute, MA in education from Tuskegee. 30 years teaching experience in various schools, most recently at a private school for black girls in North Carolina. "Negro youngsters need the guidance of a cultured member of their own race who can teach them proper manners and morals."

KEEP THESE DITTOES IN YOUR NOTEBOOK.

Name _____

EVALUATION OF GROUP PROCESS

Make a mark on each of the rating scales below to show how you judge the discussion in which you just participated.

A. Climate

bored	1 2 3 4 5	lively
tense, hostile	1 2 3 4 5	relaxed, friendly
closed minds uncooperative	1 2 3 4 5	open-minded, cooperative

B. Thinking

little use of facts	1 2 3 4 5	good use of facts
frequently got off subject	1 2 3 4 5	stuck to the subject
confusion, no direction	1 2 3 4 5	good sense of direction

C. Communication

one person monopolized	1 2 3 4 5	everyone contributed
lengthy contributions	1 2 3 4 5	brief contributions
did not listen to each other	1 2 3 4 5	listened carefully to each other

LESSON SIX

Objective

Some students will role-play social-emotional roles. Others will guess at the roles being played.

Procedure

Before students enter, arrange seats as per Lesson Two, but do not place an extra chair in the inner cirlce.

Instruct group representatives to take seats in the inner circle. Give them their group's report from yesterday and copies of ditto "Instructions for the Group in the Fishbowl." Give the observers the ditto "Social-Emotional Roles." Write on the board the names of the people in the fishbowl. Cut up in advance one of the dittoes listing social-emotional roles. Give one negative role to each of six members of the fishbowl. Give a signal for the discussion to start.

After ten minutes or less, stop the discussion. Ask observers to say who was playing which role and to state the manifestations of each role.

Assign positive roles to members of the fishbowl. Ask them to proceed with the discussion.

When consensus has been reached on the group task, ask observers to say who was playing which role and to state the manifestations of each role.

Discuss the change in the progress of the discussion when the group switched from negative to positive roles.

Be sure to give the fishbowlers copies of the ditto "Social-Emotional Roles" for their information and notebooks.

Materials

Secretaries' reports

Instruction for the Group in the Fishbowl (ditto)

Social-Emotional Roles (ditto)

Individual slips of each of the roles

Evaluation

Discussants' ability to play specified roles and observers' ability to guess roles being played.

Comment

Despite the difficulty of the tasks, the students performed very well in the first period class. In the second period, the students had difficulty role-playing.

The most noticeable difference when the roles were switched from negative to positive was the change in noise level! When the negative roles were being played, the participatns were almost screaming. When the positive roles were being played, they spoke so quietly that the observers had difficulty hearing the discussion. Also, the discussion proceeded so smoothly in the first period class that they reached consensus very quickly. The second period did not finish; their ability to play positive roles was poor.

As for the subject matter of the discussion, there was a high degree of unanimity among all the groups in both

classes. I was surprised by the conservatism of the students' standards. They tended to choose the older, more experienced teachers, despite the assininity of their stated views. I have changed one adjective in the statement of applicant A. Originally she had described herself as "attractive". I changed this to "intelligent" to avoid violent hostility on the part of some girls. The final ranking of the first period class was as follows:

1. H
2. D
3. C
4. G
5. J
6. F
7. E
8. I
9. B
10. A

INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE GROUP IN THE FISH BOWL

Today I am asking you to do two things at once, which you may find rather difficult but also a lot of fun.

The group task is to arrive at final consensus on the ranking of the teachers. Proceed as you did yesterday in your original group. (You will need yesterday's dittoes.)

While carrying on the discussion, six of you will be asked to play specific roles. Your role will be given to you on a separate slip of paper. Don't tell the other members of the group what you role is.

The task of the observers is to identify the role each of you is playing.

First you will be asked to play negative roles. When I think the observers have guessed what role each of you is playing, I will stop the discussion. Then I will assign each of you positive roles and you will continue the discussion.

Good luck!

P.S. Be sure to get a copy of the ditto the observers have before you leave the class.

Today the students in the discussion group have been assigned specific roles to play. It it your task as an observer to identify the role each is playing.

SOCIAL - EMOTIONAL ROLES

There are many roles, other than task roles, that people play in groups. Here are some.

Positive (helpful) Roles

Encourager: Is warm and responsive to others; accepts the contributions of others; gives others an opportunity for recognition.

Expresser of group feelings: Senses the feeling, the mood, the relationships within the group and shares his own feeling with other members.

Harmonizer: Attempts to reconcile differences and reduce tension by giving people a chance to explore their differences.

Compromiser: When his own idea or status is involved in a conflict, he offers to compromise; he admits error when he is wrong and disciplines himself to maintain group solidarity.

Gate-keeper: Keeps communication channels open and helps the participation of others.

Standard-setter: Expresses standards for the group to achieve; applies standards in evaluating the group process and the achievement of the group.

Negative (destructive) Roles

Dominator: Interrupts, monopolizes, is very sure of everything he says, tries to lead the group, asserts authority, is autocratic.

Blocker: Interferes with the progress of the group by rejecting ideas; takes a negative attitude toward all suggestions, argues unduly, is pessimistic, refuses to cooperate.

Deserter: Withdraws in some way; is indifferent or aloof; may be completely silent; daydreams, doodles, whispers to others.

Aggressor: Struggles for status, boasts, criticizes; tries to destroy the self-esteem or status of others.

Recognition-seeker: Attempts to get attention by boasting or claiming long experience or great accomplishments.

Playboy: Displays a lack of involvement in the group process by horseplay, inappropriate humor. or cynicism.

KEEP THIS DITTO IN YOUR NOTEBOOK.

LESSON SEVEN

Objective

The students will read a story and write five good discussion questions based on that story.

Procedure

Have books available.

Distribute dittoes. Students will follow instructions in the ditto.

Materials

A though-provoking story which can be read by most students in less than a period.

Instructions for Today (ditto)

Evaluation

Discussion questions submitted by students.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TODAY

Take a book from the front table. Read "The Trouble" which begins on p. 11. (Responding: Four)

After you have read the story, write five questions about the story which might be used for group discussion.

Here are the standards for a good discussion question:

1. Is the wording clear and to the point? (If sentence structure, spelling, and punctuation are poor, your sentence will not be clear.)

2. Does the question indicate a specific area to be covered in the discussion?

3. Is the question suited to group discussion?

4. Is the question phrased objectively? (This means that the question doesn't reveal how the writer of the question thinks or feels.)

5. Does the question encourage a variety of responses, solutions, or alternatives?

Be sure your paper has a correct heading and suitable title. Be sure to turn it in.

LESSON EIGHT

Objective

The students will discuss a story in small groups.

Procedure

Have available the books used yesterday.

Distribute ditto "Practice Your Discussion Skills." The students will follow the instructions in the ditto.

Materials

Books containing the short story.

Practice Your Discussion Skills (ditto)

Evaluation

The process and content of the discussions.

Comment

You will need to prepare your own ditto in accordance with the story you choose. Use the best discussion questions submitted by the students.

PRACTICE YOUR DISCUSSION SKILLS

Take a book from the table.

Get into a group of four or five people. Choose a secretary.

Discuss the following questions one at a time.

The secretary should record the group's final answer to each question. Everyone should sign the paper.

Twenty minutes before the end of the period we will come together to share our answers.

QUESTIONS

1. Why did Old Gramma let in the white man?

2. What was the "funny idea" the narrator said he got hold of? (p. 16, top left)

3. Why did the priest say, "That's the trouble," when the white man said, "I'm a Catholic too, Father,"? (P. 19, top right)

4. Notice the use of the word "trouble" in the above passages. It is also used in the title. What's the connection?

5. What is the theme of the story?

6. According to the story, what does it take to make men brothers?

- - - - - - - - - - - -

For your information, this is the poem quoted in the story.

IF WE MUST DIE by Claude McKay

If we must die--let it not be like hogs
Hunted and penned in an inglorious spot,
While round us bark the mad and hungry dogs,
Making their mock at our accursed lot.
It we must die--oh, let us nobly die,

So that our precious blood may not be shed
In vain; then even the monsters we defy
Shall be constrined to honor us though dead!
Oh, Kinsmen! We must meet the common foe;
Though far outnumbered, let us show us brave,
And for their thousand blows deal one deathblow!
What though before us lies the open grave?
Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack,
Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!

LESSON NINE

Objective

The students will respond to each other.

Procedure

Tell students that one of the weakest aspects of their discussions is that they rush to give their own opinions without listening to what others have said and making appropriate comments.

There are a number of types of responses you can make to another speaker. (List on board and have students copy in their notebooks.)

Raising questions ("When did you first begin to feel this way?")

Being supportive ("I have also felt that way, so I can sympathize with you.")

Clarifying ("Do you mean that your father frequently beat you or only threatened to?")

Reflecting what the speaker says or feels ("You apparently are very angry at your father.")

Giving examples from one's own experience ("A similar problem confronted me last year; my parents wouldn't let me use the car.")

Today we are going to do two exercises to help us to listen and to respond.

Assign letters of the alphabet (A through M) to members of the class.

Here is an outline of group interactions in a good discussion. We are going to have a discussion following this outline. Distribute ditto "Pattern of Interaction."

If you have been given a letter, read down the list and circle your letter when it appears at the beginning of a sentence. That is to remind you that that step is your move.

What topic would you like to discuss? (My students suggested "Should marijuana be legalized?") Write the discussion question on the board.

Students discuss the question by following the outline.

Then analyze the requested responses that gave the most difficulty. Suggest possible wordings.

Next ask for two volunteers to play a game. Ask one to be the speaker, the other to be the listener/responder. The rest of the class should listen carefully to see if the latter follows instructions and to observe how his responses affect the speaker.

Ask the speaker to choose a topic of personal interest. (A personal problem lends itself best to the activity.) The object of the game is for the responder to keep the speaker talking as long as possible without ever giving his own ideas or disagreeing with the speaker. Keep track of time.

When the two people have no more to say, ask observers to comment. Ask the speaker how he felt about the responses.

Repeat with two other volunteers. Compare time.

Try a short full-class discussion on a question the students choose. No one may give his own idea until he has

first responded to the previous speaker. Ask a student to summarize the discussion.

Materials

Pattern of Interaction (Ditto)

Evaluation

Students' ability to listen and to respond.

Comment

Another technique for training students to listen is to stop a discussion occasionally and ask a student to summarize. A good discussion should always be summarized at the end.

Keep this ditto in your notebook.

PATTERN OF INTERACTION

1. A starts discussion by giving his opinion.
2. B responds to A, indicating whether he agrees or disagrees and why.
3. C responds to both A and B but gives no new idea. She simply states agreement or disagreement with A and B.
4. D introduces new idea--his opinion.
5. E responds to D.
6. F asks E a question to clarify his opinion.
7. E answers.
8. G relates his opinion to that of either B or A.
9. B responds to G.
10. A responds to G.
11. H responds to G.
12. G replies.
13. F presents his opinion.
14. I responds to F.
15. J introduces new idea--her opinion.
16. K points out the relationship between J's opinion and those voiced by A, B, D, and G.
17. L asks K what his opinion is.
18. K replies.
19. K responds to K's reply, revealing his own opinion.
20. M introduces new idea--his opinion.
21. E responds to M's opinion.
22. H responds to M's opinion.
23. I responds to M's opinion and indicates her view.
24. A summarizes the position of the group.

LESSON TEN

Objective

The students will practice all the discussion skills learned in the unit.

Procedure

Distribute ditto "Final Discussion in Discussion Skills Unit" as students enter. The students will follow the instructions on the ditto.

Assignment

Read carefully all you dittoes and notes on this unit to prepare yourself for tomorrow.

Materials

Final Discussion in Discussion Skills Unit (ditto)

Evaluation of Group Process (ditto) -- same form as used in Lesson Five

Evaluation

Teacher's observation of discussion skills

Student evaluations

FINAL DISCUSSION IN DISCUSSION SKILLS UNIT

Today we will practice using all the skills we have learned in this unit.

Get into a group of six or seven students.

Pretend that we have reached that ideal situation in which students not only have a voice in hiring teachers but also have a voice in evaluating (judging) them.

Your group's task today is to design a report card for teachers.

Every member of the group will make contributions to the discussion. All decisions will be made by reaching consensus.

Follow this procedure:

1. Choose a group leader if the group decides they want one.

2. Choose a group secretary.

3. Decide on the <u>five</u> standards that are most essential for a good teacher to meet.

4. Decide on a method for juding how well a teacher meets each of these standards. (Ask yourselves how you will <u>know</u> how well each standard is met.)

5. Decide on a grading scale. Be sure your grading scale has an explanation. (For example, if you decide to use letter grades, what does each letter mean?)

6. Choose two people to represent your group in tomorrow's discussion.

7. Be sure that the secretary's report meets everyone's satisfaction. Then sign the report. The two representatives for tomorrow should be indicated. Then present the report to the teacher.

Save this ditto for tomorrow.

LESSON ELEVEN

Objective

The students will demonstrate their knowledge of good discussion skills either by participating in a fishbowl discussion or by evaluating that discussion.

Procedure

In advance, arrange seats for a fishbowl discussion.

Give the students who will participate in the discussion copies of ditto "Instructions for Final Fishbowl" and the secretaries's reports from the previous day. Give all other students copies of ditto "How Well Can You Evaluate a Discussion?"

Write on the board the names of the students in the fishbowl.

When everyone is ready, give a signal for the discussion to start.

The teacher will need to fill out an observation report in detail in order to grade the students' evaluations.

When discussion is finished, collect report and evaluations.

Materials

Secretaries' reports

Instructions for Final Fishbowl (ditto)

How Well Can You Evaluate a Discussion? (ditto)

Evaluation

Discussion skills demonstrated by discussants

Observers' accuracy of evaluation

INSTRUCTIONS FOR FINAL FISHBOWL

Your task is to reach a final consensus on all the items in yesterday's task. In other words, you will design the best possible report card using the best ideas from each of yesterday's groups. In doing so, you will demonstrate that you can use all of the discussion skills we have practiced in individual lessons.

You will need the ditto from yesterday's discussion and the report of the group you are representing.

Please speak loud enough so that the observers can hear your discussion. They have a task to do also.

Name _____ Section ___

Date _____

HOW WELL CAN YOU EVALUATE A DISCUSSION?

Today you will receive a grade for your evaluation of the discussion in the fishbowl.

Read this form carefully before the discussion starts so that you will know what to listen for. You may refer to any of the dittoes or notes in your notebook. If you cannot hear, ask the group to speak louder.

1. Did the group have one leader or was leadership shared?

   _____

2. Name the participant who performed the duties of leader most frequently. _____

3. Were all of the following task roles performed? Place a check after those that were. Place an x after those that were not.

   Initiating _____

   Information seeking _____

   Opinion seeking _____

   Information giving _____

   Opinion giving _____

   Clarifying _____

   Summarizing _____

   Consensus testing _____

4. Name a positive social-emotional role that was performed in the group. _____

5. Who performed that role? _____

6. Name a negative social-emotional role that was performed.

   _____

7. Who performed that role? _____

(If no one did either of the above, say so.)

8. Rate the entire discussion by choosing one of the numbers on the scale below. Write the number here:

_____

1. All task roles were performed and shared by all participants. No negative social-emotional roles. Excellent listening-responding.
2. All task roles were performed but not by everyone in the group. No negative social-emotional roles.
3. Some task roles were not performed.
4. Two or three people dominated the discussion without encouraging others.
5. One or two people dominated the discussion. They made no attempt to encourage others or test everyone for consensus. Most other members were deserters.

EXAMPLE OF STUDENT-DESIGNED TEACHER REPORT CARD

Standards

1. A good teacher will relate to the students.
2. A good teacher will control the students.
3. A good teacher will keep the class interested.
4. A good teacher will teach the subject.
5. A good teacher will give the students a chance to express themselves.

Method of Evaluation

From the beginning we will keep a chart or grading sheet on which we will record the work the teacher gives from day to day, and on the basis of this we will judge the teacher.

Grading Scale

A An excellent teacher really gets her points across.

B A teacher who gets her work done but doesn't always ask the students what they want to learn.

C Fairly good on both of the above but could be better.

D A teacher who teaches you when she feels like it.

F This teacher doesn't give a damn as long as she's paid.

LESSON TWELVE

(not a full period)

Objective

The students will complete a post-test questionnaire on freedom of expression in this class.

Procedure

Distribute questionnaire.

Students will answer questionnaire.

Collect.

Materials

Freedom of Expression in This Class, November 8, 1973 (ditto)

Evaluation

Comparison of pre-test and post-test responses.

You do not need to put your name on this paper, but please answer it carefully.

FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION IN THIS CLASS
(November 8, 1973)

We reached consensus on the following definitions for freedom of expression:

Period 1. Expressing ourselves freely and openly means expressing ourselves in a relaxed manner without feeling hostility or creating hostility.

Period 2. Expressing ourselves freely and openly means speaking up when we have something to say.

Using the definitions agreed on by your class, answer the following questions.

In this class I feel free to express myself (check one)

all the time _____

most of the time _____

sometimes _____

never _____

When I don't feel free to express myself, the reason most often is (If you checked "all the time" above, leave this blank.)

other students wouldn't like it _____

the teacher souldn't like it _____

other students are talking _____

the teacher is talking _____

I don't trust other students _____

I don't trust the teacher _____

Other (please specify) _____

The students who feel free to express themselves make up

100% of the class _____ 25% of the class _____

75% of the class _____ nobody _____

50% of the class _____

Has the teacher done anything during the Discussion Skills Unit to help you to feel more free to express yourself? ____

If your answer is "yes", what has she done?

Have other students done anything in this unit to help you to feel more free to express yourself? _____

If your answer is "yes", what have they done?

If your answer is "no", what could they have done?

COMPARISON OF PRE-TEST AND POST-TEST RESPONSES

	Period 1		Period 2	
	Pre-test	Post-test	Pre-test	Post-test
In this class I feel free...				
all the time	7	5	4	7
most of the time	5	11	4	10
sometimes	14	15	13	12
never	2	0	7	0
When I don't feel free...				
other students wouldn't like it	4	4	2	1
teacher wouldn't like it	1	1	6	0
other students talking	9	6	5	6
teacher talking	3	0	4	5
don't trust students	0	0	0	2
don't trust teacher	1	0	3	2
other	7	13	6	5
Students who feel free...				
100% of class	2	3	4	2
75%	9	14	7	12
50%	3	11	5	11
25%	10	2	12	4
nobody	2	1	1	0

POST-TEST RESPONSES NOT GIVEN ON PREVIOUS PAGE

(Period 1 only)

Reasons listed under "other" for not feeling free:

3 I don't feel like talking.
3 I have nothing to say.
Someone's point is similar to mine or mine wouldn't be of importance.
I'm not sure why.
2 I'd rather listen to others.
I am sometimes scared of the students looking at me like I don't know what I'm talking about.
Most of the time it's already been said.
No specific answer--I just don't.

Has teacher done anything...to help...

Yes 27

What has she done?

She has led me to believe in her so well that I feel that if you haven't learned that you would never.
Presents a free atmosphere in the class.
She listens to what you have to say and doesn't try to rush you or tell you that you don't know what you're saying.
She's joked with us and hasn't given us a hard time.
2 She has asked respect while others are speaking.
She help us learn what discussion is all about. She let us say what we really wanted to say. She has helped us in many ways.
You have made me more pertinent in the school rules of teacher etc.
Because she tried to get the point over to you.
Gives each person a chance to say what she or he wants.
Well, she told us it would be part of our grades, and I feel like if it's a part of our grade I'll do anything, but the majority of the time she leaves the decision up to us.
she's tried to get every student used to one another, and show them that they are free to speak.
By trying to get answers from us. Or asking us questions.
She sat and watched and didn't interfere when the group was talking, but she talked often.
She helped us by giving discussions and having each person follow a specific role. and she tried to enhance each student to express his or herself.
She got the fishbowl together and that made people feel free to express themselves.
You try to bring things out of students when you think they have something to say.
I think the idea of having group discussions allows people to express themselves and also the fishbowl.

She talks with you and tries to have group work for you.
2 Put us in discussing groups.
Group session: discussing in groups of 5 to 8.
She tried to make you feel more relaxed and she brought the problem out in the open. She also had an open mind and listened to everybody's opinion.
She has participated more than usual.
By giving us a situation in which everyone would most likely say something or want to say something. The teacher has also given us time to discuss other things.

No 4
What could she have done?
She could have explained to the other students that it is not right to prejudge laugh at, or make fun of another person's opinion.
Whenever I want to express myself I will sometimes but not often.
She couldn't have done nothing. It was all my fault because I don't have much to say in here

Have students done anything to help?
Yes 19
Some did.
I am not sure.
What have they done?
Because the class stopped and listened most of the time and they don't make you feel cracked up or let down. They just listen.
They listen to what you have to say and if you get stuck on something or can't really put it in the right words they would speak up and help you out.
In these few weeks I think they have learned that more than one person has a different opinion than they, and in this way have given them a chance to express the way they feel.
They let us say what's on our mind. They really didn't get mad when we say things they didn't like.
Told their feeling, to make theings feel the same etc.
Everybody had something to say.
5 They listen to what you're trying to say and you listen to them.
Some have tried to carry on conversations that are interesting to you and they want to hear your opinion.
By saying that most people don't say anything. So that makes some people feel bad so they talk.
3 They have attempted to express themselves and this gives me the initiative to express myself.
They asked questions about what you were saying.
When we are in our groups we try to get others to express themselves.

By just saying something or their actions Most of the students here seem to be quiet but when they make a statement it's sort of shocking

No ?
What could they have done?
They made me feel <u>less</u> free to express myself. They should have learned to respect another person's opinion as much as they would like theirs to be respected. Not try to be mean or anything to someone who is expressing himself just because they haven't agreed with him in the past.
Listen to others opinions.
They acted normal.
They couldn't have done anything really, because only you can make up your mind, or express what you feel. For some people, if they see that the atmosphere is relaxed they might feel free then but as for myself it makes no difference.
Nothing.
They (the 50% who do not feel free) couldn't have done anything because if they won't participate and express themselves, how could they help me?

UNIT EVALUATION
(period 1 only)

Do you believe that your own ability to contribute to a discussion has been improved by this unit?

Yes 22

In what way do you think you have improved?

7 I feel freer (or less afraid or more relaxed) to say what I have to say.
4 I talk more.
2 I listen more, with more understanding.
I now know almost everyone in the class.
Improved my discussion skills.
I have improved by really seeing the other students' point of view.
Sharing ideas.
I think I improved because now I can go to my history class and stand up and give a good discussion with no swet, and most of all without getting nervous.

No 9

Why?

3 I have not spoken more than I used to
2 I didn't make an effort to try.
I have learned how some people turn against you just because they don't like what you say.
Came in at end of unit.

Activities from which students believed they learned the most:

13 Fishbowl on 8 statements about groups
9 Fishbowl in which social-emotional roles were played
7 Reaching consensus on teachers to be hired (small groups)
6 Completing evaluation of small-group discussion on ranking teachers
6 Discussing the story
6 Full-class discussion: responding to previous speaker
5 Reaching consensus on 8 statements about groups (small groups)
5 Completing observers' report on first fishbowl
4 Summary of responses to pre-test questionnaire
4 Writing discussion questions for a story
4 Evaluating final fishbowl
3 Pre-test questionnaire
3 Completing observers' report on social-emotional roles (fishbowl)

2 Reaching consensus on report card for teachers (small groups)
2 Final fishbowl
1 Making live sculptures
1 Game of keeping the speaker talking
1 Completing evaluation of last small-group discussion

Activities students enjoyed most:

16 Fishbowl in which social-emotional roles were played
14 Fishbowl on 8 statements about groups
13 Making live sculptures
10 Reaching consensus on teachers to be hired (small groups)
6 Full-class discussion: responding to previous speaker
6 Game of keeping the speaker talking
4 Writing discussion questions for a story
4 Discussing the story
3 Completing observers' report on social-emotional roles (fishbowl)
2 Reaching consensus on report card for teachers (small groups)
2 Completing observers' report on first fishbowl
1 Summary of responses to pre-test questionnaire
1 Reaching consensus on 8 statements about groups (small groups)
1 Following a script of discussion interaction
1 Completing evaluation of last small group discussion
1 Evaluating final fishbowl